

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 32 are pending in this application, of which claims 1, 9, 15 and 21 to 23 are the independent claims. Favorable reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 15, 16 and 18 to 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto (U.S. Patent 5,923,337). Applicants disagree.

Claim 15 is directed to a presentation system. The system includes a motion tracking device connected to a user, an audio receiving device connected to the user and an audio receiver/converter to transform the audio into audio of a different gender to that of the user. The system also includes a system to produce an animated three-dimensional character from the motion and converted audio.

The applied art is not understood to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of claim 15. In particular, Yamamoto does not disclose or suggest an audio receiver/converter to transform the audio from into audio of a different gender to that of the user.

In this regard, Yamamoto describes adjusting values of a voice parameter set according to a voice parameter profile. The voice parameter profile values can correct a difference in frequency range between a female voice input and a male voice input. Yamamoto uses the voice parameter file to equalize voice input to account for differences in gender (see column 7, lines 36 to 43). However, nowhere in Yamamoto does he describe changing the gender of the audio from male to female or vice versa. Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the art rejection.

Claims 1 to 14, 17, 21 to 30 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 (b) as being obvious over Ritchey (U.S. Patent 5,495,576) over Yamamoto. As shown above, Applicant has amended the claims to define the invention more clearly. In view of these amendments, withdrawal of the art rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a virtual reality presentation method. The method includes capturing motion of a user, capturing audio of the user, and transforming the audio of the user to a different gender. The method also includes animating a character with the motion and transformed audio in real-time.

The applied art is not understood to disclose or suggest the foregoing features of claim 1. In particular, neither Ritchey nor Yamamoto, taken separately or in combination, disclose or suggest transforming the audio of the user to a different gender.

Specifically, Ritchey describes receiving and sending audio signals. However, Ritchey does not describe altering the audio much less transforming the audio into a different gender.

As described above for claim 15, Yamamoto does not disclose transforming the audio of the user to a different gender.

Even if Ritchey and Yamamoto were combined, none of the features of the hypothetical combination discloses or suggests transforming the audio of the user to a different gender. For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicant requests withdrawal of the art rejection.

Claims 9, 21, 22 and 23 roughly correspond to claims 1 and 15 in that each contain the limitation that the gender of the audio of the user is changed. Accordingly, claims 9, 21, 22 and 23 are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons noted above with respect to claim 1.

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Applicants submit that all dependent claims now depend on allowable independent claims.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that the entire application is now in condition for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

All correspondence should be directed to the address below. Applicant's attorney can be reached by telephone at the number shown below.

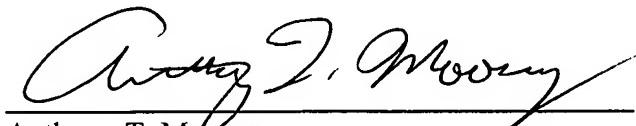
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Enclosed is a check for a \$475 fee for the Three-Month Extension of Time. No other fee is believed to be due for this Response; however, if any fees are due, please apply such fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1050 referencing Attorney Docket 13151-004001.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 3/26/2004



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